

CONSIDERATIONS
ON THE PROPRIETY OF ADOPTING A
GENERAL TICKET
IN
SOUTH-CAROLINA,
FOR THE ELECTION OF
REPRESENTATIVES IN CONGRESS
AND ELECTORS OF
PRESIDENT AND VICE-PRESIDENT
OF THE
UNITED STATES.

ADDRESSED TO THE PEOPLE OF
SOUTH-CAROLINA,
BY
C R I T O.

CHARLESTON, (South-Carolina.)

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DEDICATION.

T O

BRIGADIER-GENERAL ROBERT ANDERSON.

PERMIT me, unknown and unsolicited, to offer the following pages, not so much to your patronage, as to your serious attention and careful perusal. Principles so dear to the happiness of a Republican people; to be adopted require only to be distinctly seen. The subject they profess to examine and unfold, is closely allied to those in the establishment of which, you have acted a manly and distinguished part.

The numbers originally appeared in the City-Gazette, under the assumed signature annexed, and have brought it with them, into the form in which they are now presented. This has been done, from a conviction, that names cannot give authority to argument, or shed lustre upon truth. Stripped as they are, of all the boast and ornament of pedigree, and above the fleeting influences of personal support;—they stand on the plain, Republican ground of *principle*, and claim no other protection, than that of sound, liberal, and unsophisticated discussion.

I will occupy but little of your time to say, that in preparing these few sheets for the press, I have

I have been obliged to employ, broken and interrupted intervals from business, ill suited to regular and elaborate investigation. Where I could have said much, I have been compelled to leave the question to the fullness and anticipation of the public mind.

My efforts to bring forward this topic, would never have survived the ephemeral being of a news-paper, but for the partiality of some friends, who considered them, as containing demonstrations of practical utility, entitled to the calm and dispassionate decision of the public judgment. With this intent, the publication is submitted — They were pleased to think its presence, too necessary at this moment, to afford me an opportunity even of correcting its imperfections, or of throwing round its humble garb the embellishments of a critical revision or the ordinary decorations of style.

To your penetration and sagacity it is needless to remark, that the views taken of the subject form but an imperfect outline of the transcendently important matter proposed for argument. I have left many interesting points of enquiry, to be surveyed and explored by the very able Republicans who compose the present legislature.

From the uniform tenor, of your political life, I feel a particular pleasure fir, in dedicating these essays to you, for I am aware, that
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your understanding is as indifferent to apology for the intrusion, as it is repugnant to adulation in the address.

I am Sir, Respectfully

Your most obedient Servant.

THE AUTHOR.

November 19th, 1801.

INTRODUCTION.

THE period has at length arrived, fellow-citizens, when a fair and honorable experiment will be given to the operation of republican principles. The season is at hand when we are to know, whether these precious principles which we have cherished with parental fondness, are to end in spurious abstractions; or whether the generous care of republicans will watch over and propitiate their birth, mature their growth and consecrate their existence. The will of the people is the soul of power; it is the aliment of all governments; it is the food which preserves their existence; they must perish without it. In America, there is an immediate consanguinity between the people and the government; it is the creature of their hands, and has been fashioned by their will. I therefore disclose my subject to you—it is an idle mockery to talk of a republican administration, without the republican co-operation of the people.

You have before you the recent and splendid instance of the efficacy of organized sentiment amongst the people, in the late presidential election. It was a great and awful movement of the will of a nation, and proves how decisive and irresistible that is, when brought to act in the majesty of its strength.

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This sudden and general combination of opinion, which nothing but an instinctive and universal sense of *danger* could have produced, has laid a broad and durable foundation on which to erect the edifice of public liberty and national happiness.

Fellow-citizens, the work is but half done, if you halt at this point in your glorious career. Hercules must not yet lean upon his club. A republican administration at the head of your government, with anti-republican representatives in congress, involves the grossest absurdity; it is a solecism in politics; it is suicide of the most atrocious character.—Awake from your dreams of fancied security, and, armed with the principle, that it is the duty of the people to establish their rights, adopt such measures as are likely to secure those great ends. Indulge not in the vain ostentation of a triumphant change, but rather be practically busied in bringing those principles to bear upon your objects, and thus infuse them into the blood and spirits of the body politic. This is not the time to abate your perseverance in the great cause you have undertaken. I pass over in silence, the injuries and insults your manly feelings have been constrained to endure under the late administration. I will not stop to enumerate your sufferings, or to mark the humiliation of the
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man, or the vile degradation of the citizen. I am content that the hand of oblivion should throw a pall over its enormities, though its bitter lessons are indelibly stamped upon the heart. The scene in retrospect is pregnant with utility for us and for posterity, as I shall fully state to you on another occasion. *South Carolina is unequivocally republican*—Is it true, fellow-citizens, that the republican sense and spirit of Carolina has been expressed by its representatives? Is the true semblance and image of Carolina reflected by its representatives in congress? Can the genius of republicanism in this State stand up and say, these are the sponsors of my political faith? If you wish to be satisfied on these points, consult, I intreat you, the proceedings of congress. But you have an efficient remedy in your hands—yes, you the freemen of South-Carolina can model, and regulate, and ordain these things as you deem proper. It is for you to arrange them, as best to answer the ends of federal legislation; to strengthen the bonds of social union; to preserve those principles which bind together, by a mysterious charm, the elements of political society; and at once, to convert *local into national representation*.

I have assigned it as a duty to myself to point out this plan to you, and to exhibit a correct and intelligible chart, by which to steer your course.

course. The true science of politics is the happiness and freedom of the people. If my arguments to honest minds carry no weight with them ; if my views are inaccurate ; and my plan incoherent, reject them. But if they are sound, if they are conclusive, unanswerable and irrefragable, *then* I ask you to support them ; then, I say, accumulate your strength, press forward to their adoption, and bring them to the ordeal of public investigation. The success of Jefferson twelve months ago, in Carolina, was deemed chimerical, nay *impossible* ; but nothing could overawe the silent working and progress of opinion, or arrest the march of principle.

—— Quod divum promittere
Nemo auderet, volvens dies en ! attulit ultro.

I shall have much to say to you on the responsibility of the present administration, and the necessity of giving to their measures that freedom of operation and chance of success, without which the executive department is completely nullified ; without this confidence and support, you will impair the beneficial energies of government, and pervert the spirit of the constitution.

In the discussion of this great question, I propose to adopt this arrangement —

1st. That

1st. That the election by *general ticket* is the true republican mode.

2d. That it will be politic and advantageous in South Carolina to adopt it in her choice of members of congress and electors.

3d. That this is the crisis for such regulation, in consequence of an accession (by the late census) of two members in our representation to congress.

I shall animadvert upon these topics with temper and argument, and I trust with effect. Republicanism is the *predicate* of my subject—public liberty its offspring, my end.

I invite you seriously to consider the question, examine it well; discussion will detect error, and you will better understand your rights; and when understood, I know you feel the energy, and have the capability to assert them.

As to myself, I declare to you, that my sincere objects are, a more complete, perfect and republican representation in congress, and a choice of electors by the people; because I will shew you, that a choice which can be *practically* made by the people, ought to be made by them, and that in such case the delegation of power to representatives ceases to be necessary or just. These are my views. I am not “puffing or blowing in the race of popularity,” nor do I seek the warm sunshine of presidential

presidential favor. I say once more, unite—consolidate your exertions—let your representatives speak out in a manly tone, *this claim of the people*, and the object is secured.

CONSIDERATIONS, &c.

PART, I.

“The Election by General Ticket is the true Republican Mode.”

IT cannot be considered as amongst the vices or follies of the people of the United States, that they persevere for any length of time in erroneous opinions concerning their political interests. It is to be lamented indeed, that in many instances the passions and prejudices of party, and the rage of opposition, have obscured these objects ; but when raised above them, by the magnitude of the subject, they are enabled from their elevation to take a distinct and comprehensive view of the true position of things, with their bearings and tendencies. From this point let us view the question before us. I have said that the election for representatives to congress, by a general ticket, is, “*the true republican mode.*” If you ask me what idea I mean to convey by “the republican mode ;” I answer, that scheme or mode of election, which proceeds *directly and immediately from the great body of the people—*

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an election *by the whole people of the State*, and not one by a detached, circumscribed *part* of the people, in a corner of the state. It is necessary to its distinctive character as a republican election, that it should be *by the people* generally, and not by a small and inconsiderable portion of that people, or by a particular class and description of men. By the existing regulations on this subject, this state is at present divided into *districts* as they stood formerly under the judicial arrangement for the election of representatives in congress. Charleston district is entitled to one member — This member is elected, we will say, by 1200 voters in Charleston district. What is he when elected, and what character is he invested with under the federal constitution? He is a representative in congress *for South-Carolina*. He represents the state through the district, independently of the will or power of the other districts of the state, *and the great majority of the people*. He is, perhaps, totally unacquainted with the policy and interests of the greatest portion of the people whom he represents, and may prove instrumental in tattering upon that very people an odious or oppressive law. This then, is a violation of the representative principle; it is representation by fiction. Whence sprung this predilection for a choice by districts? Is there any
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forcery in the territorial metes and bounds of a district? Is there a magic line drawn round it, which constitutes the few within it, *sovereign* over the many beyond it? Or is it sound republican policy, in great national arrangements, to balance the suffrages of a country against itself, by carving out geographical sections of the people. I hold this principle to be strictly republican, that the representative of South-Carolina in congress, ought to be the choice of *the people of South-Carolina*; that if he is the representative of the state, he can only properly be so by an expression of the will of the majority of that state. The men of Ninety-Six, of Washington and Pinckney, of Camden, of Orangeburgh &c. have as strong a claim to a share in his choice, as the people of the district by whom he is elected. If they have not, he is but the representative of a district. This election by districts, is a surrender by the people of the great right of election and representation, and evidently enables the few to dictate to and controul the many; it splits the republican sense and energy of the people into little aristocracies, and by dividing, dissipates their strength and enfeebles their voice. It narrows down, nay, destroys the *elective privilege*, because the inhabitants living within particular lines, are restricted to the choice of *one member*, when

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they could practically elect six. The result then is, that by the present anti-republican arrangement, the citizen is seriously abridged of his rights; or in other words, *he is excluded from a voice in the election of five sixths of the congressional representation* of the state of which he is a member. The more you subdivide the state, the farther you recede from the genuine elective principles. A few, no doubt, consider it as the perfection of representative government; because, in consequence of particular influences, a *favourite member* can be secured; but of what consequence is this to the people generally of the district, who thereby lose their voice in the *entire representation!*

This may, and has proved of more serious importance, than the acquisition of a single individual. Districts are the nurseries of a local popularity, in a variety of instances unknown to, and not acknowledged by the people at large. I will not now enquire into its causes, but I am sure, that in three cases out of six, it would not stand the republican test of the general ticket; something more than district popularity and the little arts *which* often given rise to it, is necessary to secure the confidence, affections and support of the whole people. It is demonstrated, that the adoption of the general ticket will enlarge the sphere of elections; that it will give to every citizen in the state, the
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right of voting for the whole representation, and thus convert the solitary district franchise into a suffrage, embracing the state, and expanding the vote for one, into a choice for the whole. Men so elected, may truly be called representatives of the people, and such an election may be denominated *republican*. The slightest view of the regulation at present of force, presents a marked departure from those great principles which form the basis of political justice. It cannot find a palliation even in the distempered jealousy of its votaries.

Before I pursue any farther, the progress of this discussion, I will answer an objection which I have frequently heard stated. If this mode by general ticket be correct and salutary, why not adopt it in the state legislature? To this I reply, that in the first place it would be highly inconvenient, and perhaps impracticable to form and concert a *state ticket*, from the number in the representation; and in the next place, *local elections* must be made, because the various *parts of the state* must be represented. The subjects of state legislation require this, for they relate almost generally to *local matters*; to questions of police, which in many cases require a *local knowledge of the country*. Not so with regard to *federal representation*—there the people of South-Carolina are represented in their collective and national capacity. They
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send six members to act for the state—there they discuss and agitate questions which involve the deepest interests of the nation; on that floor they settle questions of *peace and war*; *they raise armies and equip navies*; *they levy direct taxes*; create and establish offices; pass *sedition and alien laws*; appropriate money for treaties, &c. Are the people of the state collectively interested in these momentous concerns? If so, ought not every man to possess the right of electing *those* from this state who have the legislative power of imposing these burthens? By district representation, responsibility is weakened and depreciated. It is in vain for the suffering citizen to complain or murmur at the most desperate projects. The reply will be, “*Sir, I represent a part of the country where my principles, measures and politics are highly relished and approved.*”—There are in fact no particular local exclusive district interests in federal legislation; none, unless you think fit to call the commerce of Charleston such; and surely that appertains to the interest of the state at large; it is well understood, and will be effectually guarded and preserved by the general ticket. District elections foster and nourish local attachments, preferences and particular views, frequently incompatible with the general good.—In situations of this kind the member adheres to his district,

district, because his popularity is at stake upon his conduct.

We will now proceed to another view of the subject. The federal principle of representation is founded upon numbers, and we are allowed in the ratio of three-fifths for our slaves. It appears, therefore, in its character and objects, to be *numerical*, though in fact in the account amongst ourselves, *property* is evidently an ingredient in its constitution, which is greatly in favor of the lower country. Slaves were in some view considered as *persons* by the convention, and were thrown into the scale by compromise; but surely in our state regulations, as to the "manner of election," we will and ought to pay a just regard to our white population, the freemen of the country. I will state, by way of example, the situation of the districts of Pinckney and Washington, which send one member to congress. They contain 63,155 white inhabitants, and at the rate of three-fifths, their number of slaves amounts to 5,877; deducting, therefore, for their present member, 33,000, it leaves an excess of 30,155 white inhabitants unrepresented, exclusive of 5,877, the federal ratio of slaves. If I include Ninety-Six district, it contains 44,405 white inhabitants, and, at the ratio I keep constantly in view, 7,257 slaves entitled to representation; deduct 33,000 for
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the member, and there remains an excess of 11,405 whites, which added to those of Washington and Pinckney, will constitute a body of 41,560 white inhabitants *completely unrepresented!* every one of whom entitled to vote would have their full share in the government, on the ballot by general ticket; so that, adding the constitutional number of their slaves, 13,134, they have in the whole 54,694, who have not even the shadow of representation.

The fact is incontrovertible, that election by districts will always leave a surplus number beyond the 33,000.

This principle of election by general ticket is not new. The states of New-Hampshire, Connecticut, Rhode-Island, New-Jersey, Delaware and Tennessee,* have each adopted it with success. In Virginia, its operation has been highly auspicious in the choice of electors.

In this part of the enquiry, I will present a feature of the subject, which will be more highly interesting, in the second number. By the constitution of the United States, the representatives in congress are to choose the president, in case of an equality of votes given by the electors of president and vice-president

* Smith's Comparative View of the different State Constitutions, published in 1796.

throughout

throughout the United States. The case has happened, and may occur again. If representation be a substitute for the presence and actual agency of the people, how were you represented on that occasion? Did you not express your sense on the question by the electors chosen at Columbia, and how was that choice treated by the district members of congress at Washington? Were you not in imminent danger of having a man forced upon you in that high and responsible office, who was not your choice? and this by men who are *called your representatives*; but in the election of five-sixths of whom you had no more to say, than if they had been sent from Connecticut. There can be no sympathy of nature between such men and those whom they are said to represent. I will enforce this remark by bringing to your view a case in point. I will introduce, for the sake of argument, the member from Beaufort and Orangeburgh, elected by 784 votes.—He is a member for 33,000! In case of reference to congress, upon the election of president and vice-president, *this vote* might have turned the scale, and decided the contest; and yet, allowing him his 33,000, I then say, that 250,000 people, under the federal constitution in this state, had not the most remote agency or instrumentality in his election. It is important here to remember, that the vote by congress

for president is by *States*, that is to say, the majority of the members from a state determine the vote of that state. In this predicament, a district member, whose politics may be at variance with the great majority of the people of his state (whose sense on the subject has been solemnly and legally expressed) decides the controversy as he pleases. The trust, in every view, is one of a most delicate and sacred character. In the first place he legislates; and, under the circumstances stated, may become *the district representative elector* of the president, who is to direct the movements and conduct the administration of the United States.

In my treatment of this subject, I banish from my view the common place objection of of an unjust combination of the majority against the minority. It is less likely to happen by general ticket than in district elections. There will be a wider range for party spirit and the fury of the "*esprit de corps*," which, by being pent up within narrow bounds, may burst forth in some violent explosion. Be this as it may, it is the law of society that the major should controul the minor party. It is the first principle of government. To suppose that it will be wrongfully exercised or grossly perverted, is to impute the worst and basest motives to our brethren of the other parts of the state.— This would be again to throw down the apple
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of discord ; to renew hostilities in the field of opinion ; and to reduce to the issue of an angry struggle in the legislature, that which ought to be a voluntary and spontaneous accommodation. They may retort in their turn and say, that we who occupy this spot, because we inhabit a magnificent city, with commerce, riches and splendor, insist upon the *right* to monopolize all the power and consequence of the country.

There are many prominent grounds of argument which appear to belong to this paper, which I shall arrange under the other heads.—I wave for the present the question concerning the electors. I think I have made it appear that the plan proposed is “the republican mode.”

I consider the election by general ticket, as one calculated to melt down the hitherto discordant opinions of Carolina into the great mass of public interest and general happiness. It will greatly tend to smooth the asperity and soften the acrimony of contending parties. It will obliterate those invidious lines of demarcation, which have been drawn between the upper and lower divisions of the state, and thus unite a people, too long estranged from each other. It will enable the people, of the west to imparl with those of the east, and of the north to harmonize with those of the south ;

fourth ;—it will draw closer the cords of affection, and bring about a gradual assimilation of republican principles, opinions and interests.

P A R T. II.

“ That it will be politic and advantageous in South-Carolina, to adopt it in her choice of Members of Congress and Electors.”

I WILL proceed, fellow-citizens, to the discussion of this interesting view of the subject, by presenting to you a feature of the case, which will arrest your most serious attention. It will impress on your minds and feelings the important necessity of adopting the arrangement proposed, and of expressing, as a people, your decided preference of the republican election by general ticket. The 4th section of the 1st article of the federal constitution, provides, “that the times, places and manner of holding elections for senators and representatives, shall be prescribed in each state by the legislature thereof; but the congress may, by law, make or alter such regulations, except as to places of choosing senators.” This shews you that your manner of election is completely and irrevocably under the controul of congress. They can dictate what
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terms they please. They are not even confined to what we consider the inestimable *vote by ballot*. You can, it is true, prescribe the mode; but they with equal authority can, in their turn, “make,” or even “alter such regulations.” It is of moment, therefore, that the regulation of your local administration should precede that of congress, because the state representatives are supposed to be conversant of your interests and requisitions. Superadded to this, it will have the weight of law, and a recent regulation of the state.—Without such an expression of the national will on your part, congress may adopt a plan repugnant to your wishes. A party there, to meet their own views, may annihilate every appearance of republican election. The supporters of sedition laws, and advocates of the destruction of the press, the organ of public opinion, I fear, would feel no great hesitation in laying their hands on the hallowed right of election. In their scheme of policy, the gradation would be easy. It is not impossible but that some of *your district members* may lend their most active aid, in snatching this privilege from the whole people of a state, to nurture their own influence, and perpetuate their continuance in power. It is not to be looked for—It is too great a stretch of patriotism, to expect, in these times, that members of congress will

will support the general ticket, by which they are at once flung into the shade, and sink into their primitive obscurity. It would be a species of ostracism, or if you please, "displacement," too galling to individual pride, and insupportable to their fancied dignity. It is unreasonable to suppose, that a district member of congress will sign his political death-warrant, by supporting the general ticket, and placing such an engine in the hands of the people. Representatives elected by *the people generally*, will speak their sense, and contend for their privileges. Knowing and possessing themselves the sentiments of their constituents, expressed in their laws, they will preserve a close adherence to their measures; and standing on the vantage ground of a certain and stable popularity, they will independently express the public will in our national council. Should congress assume the regulation of this subject, you will have secured two great and leading objects—the adoption of the general ticket by this state, and the consequent support of your members, raised to the floor of congress by that general and republican choice. As we shall have the whole state to make our selection from, these will be men of prominent character, great talents and high confidence. For these reasons it is advantageous to adopt it; for if the question was brought forward at this

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day, as a state, we labour under the most flagrant disadvantages, in the total disregard shewn to the opinions of the people, by some of the district representatives. Exercise your rights while you have the power to do so, and when the question is agitated before congress, let not South-Carolina be cited as an instance of the election by districts. Abandon it immediately ; dismiss all inferior considerations as unworthy of a free and enlightened state, and, derogatory to those virtuous principles which are spreading their influence around us.

I ask you, with mingled sensations of melancholy recollection and pain, what would have been your fate, if the question had been discussed in the last congress, about the time of the memorable ballot for president of the United States ? I know your feelings, and will not aggravate their mortification, by raising the curtain of that federal scene !

It is for you to apply a speedy and effectual remedy to these disorders. *The collective voice of the state* is the grand healing panacea. The vote by general ticket will either work off the *pecant* vitiated humours of the system, or, like the caustic, destroy the corroding gangrene, with which we are politically afflicted. I look to the people and their representatives at Columbia, for these great and sanative applications.

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What is representation? It is an expedient adopted in government, by which the people delegate the management of their rights, to persons elected by them for that purpose, and for their benefit. There are two essential covenants in the contract between the representative and the constituent. In the first place, there must be fidelity to the trust, in the representative; and secondly, in case of misconduct, that the constituent may change the appointment and discharge him. I have before observed to you, that the *district member*, the moment he is chosen, is transformed “into the representative of the state;” he represents the aggregate interests of the country. Now what *controul* have the rest of the people over this member in case of misconduct? Suppose he were to persist for years in a train of conduct hostile and disgusting to every other district in the state; you have no alternative, you must submit to the caprice of the district which sent him, or rather you must acquiesce in their direction of your concerns. The contract spoken of, is therefore a mockery. But, say the friends of the present scheme, how are we to know what men to elect on this general ticket, except by reputation? I say it is a very good standard by which to elect a man. Every election is liable to the same objection, if it be one, for all the electors even of a parish, cannot

cannot pretend to an intimate and personal knowledge of a candidate. In a district it is idle to expect it—an unfit man will have less chance by the general, than by district election. It is not probable that a man qualified by talents and character for congress, will be unknown to the people at large. I think I could produce some instances of district elections in which the member could not have been known by two thirds of the inhabitants. Besides, general reputation is a never failing test. We are obliged to elect *our President and Vice-President* in that way, and no republican complains of the result. Is it not better to elect generally in this mode and under these circumstances, than that the people of Pendleton, Abbeville, York, Edgefield, or elsewhere, should be represented by men *whom they do not know even by reputation*! But if the observation had force, there is no human institution without objection, and this of the general ticket is counterbalanced by greater, solid and positive advantages. There is no danger of any embarrassment of this kind—the citizens will take care to select proper persons of known and fixed principles, and of attractive and established merit; they have taken too much on trust already; they will not easily be again entrapped by professions. It is the duty of a good soldier to look well to the out-works, when an attack is meditated.

tated on the garrison.

I think it may be affirmed with truth, that you never will have a representation in congress wholly republican, till the adoption of the general ticket. You may, by the district choice, secure two or three of that description. In some instances we have done so, and owe them much for their zeal, and ardent, though unsuccessful services.

But that must be considered an execrable scheme of politics, which leaves such great interests to contingent and fortuitous occurrences, and parcels out the people for the accommodation of particular men. If it be called *compromise*, it is a contemptible barter of *rights*, for something as insignificant as a mess of pottage !

The truth is, that this election by districts was engendered by influence and interests which have lost their hold upon the people.—The power of *names* has died away. That day is passed, and you are emancipated from their controul, by the genius of republicanism.—Drugged as you have been by the anodynes of superior claims, family pretentions, and exclusive rights, it is time to apply the stimulants of justice and republican policy, to awaken you from the deep sleep into which you had sunk. An unbounded confidence may sometimes degenerate into a torpid negligence
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of public concerns. It is in vain to say, that the existing mode has been in practice upwards of ten years. Too long, indeed, have we endured it; but time cannot sanctify its use, nor give a right by prescription to govern.—It is of no consequence to the subject, whether the principle I contend for, be coeval with the usage of New-Hampshire, or upstart with the present period. I ask, is it fair? Is it equal and salutary? Is it republican?

There is a spirit of free and rational enquiry abroad, and it is our duty to follow truth wherever it leads us.

We are now settling a question of right, on the basis of political convenience and expediency. It is sufficient for the purpose, that we see it, and to insure its success, that we will it. Surely the recent transactions in congress, are sufficient to rouse us to a sense of our situation. The people are called the source of power. If this means any thing more than metaphorical fiction, the stream should possess the qualities of the fountain. A representative, who, if I may use the expression, is born of the people, should bear about him some filial resemblances: the offspring should exhibit some traits and lineaments of its parent.—You never will see these points of similitude 'till the adoption of the general ticket—Without it, you may struggle in vain for the attain-

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ment of true liberty. Even her sacred name without it, in the present posture of things, becomes an empty sound.

I know full well how this question stands with a particular party. I am aware, that with certain characters, there is a prejudice bordering on antipathy, respecting the beneficial extension of this privilege to the people generally. I agree with a great and wise politician, that this is a mist, which the sun that has *now* risen, will speedily dissipate. They may keep it about them as tight as the countryman in the fable, did his cloak—that same sun, without any more violence than the warmth of his beams, will compel them to throw it aside, unless they feel an inclination to sweat under it.

The people by this time are too fully apprised of the principles stated, to be any longer excluded from their rightful share in the national government. After this view of the propositions already submitted to you, permit me to introduce to your serious reflection, the dilemma into which your political character, as a people, has been thrown. I had almost asked you indeed, whether you had any national political character? I venerate your principles, and say, yes, you have. But by what fatal delusion; by what mistaken and inverted policy has that character been degraded
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and metamorphosed in congress? It is a fact well known to men of information, that South-Carolina has been considered wanting, by her sister republican states, in the sterling qualities of which they are composed. They judge of you in this way. South-Carolina has for upwards of ten years past, uniformly sent a majority of men devoted to the federal interests and its various plans, and yet you are republicans at home. The people, the legislature, and the electors are republicans.— You have never yet voted for John Adams as president; but you have sent representatives to congress, who embraced with open arms, his destructive scheme of politics. Some of them no sooner entered the hall of congress, than they became his most active and favored agents. It was natural that this should have excited suspicion, and even disgust in those who saw the odious despotism he was about to establish. They concluded there was some leaven of anti republican spirit in all this. Perhaps it was not unjust to remark, what a strange amphibious people! What an inexplicable and incongruous mixture! With republican materials to work upon, they construct a representation in congress directly the reverse of the principles prevalent in their own state; and elect them, it would seem, for no other purpose, than to subvert the order of things antecedently.

antecedently maintained and established among themselves. Such things, without much aid from fancy, may create distrust. No man can find an apology for such blind repulsive conduct, who will calmly review some of the elections in the upper and lower districts. It may well be asked, of what consequence is it, that you elect Jefferson and Burr, if you destroy with your left hand, what you have raised with your right? What is it then which keeps up these petty repugnancies in congress, which dishonor a people? I tell you the mass, composed of these discordant elements and dissimilar opinions, is held together by the compressive force of district elections—Remove them, and the evil is radically cured.

I speak with the freedom of history, when I assert, that so doubtful were those in power of your politics, that *you have always been calculated upon; you have even been pledged* for some federal votes for president, till they discovered your obstinate perseverance (as they are pleased to term it) in jacobinism. They expected that the same delusion which sent your congressional representatives, would predominate in the choice of electors. Fortunately for us and the United States, they were deceived; and we have escaped the scorn of republicans, and the execrations of posterity. Your splendid patriotism dispelled every hostile project,
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and changed, perhaps, the destinies of America. From that moment, republicanism has become the ascendant and governing principle in the administration of our affairs. How long it will remain so, if you madly persist in the system of district election, time alone can determine. There is no mode, in my opinion, by which you can be redeemed from this wretched thralldom, and vindicate your republican character, but by the efficacious remedy of the general ticket. It is the only mode, by which you can infuse into congress *your* unadulterated portion of popular sentiment. It is in fact the only one by which the people of a state can be said to enjoy a substantial federal representation. *This is the charter of your freedom!* Guard and protect it with republican institutions, and I pronounce it indestructible. The current of public opinion is gradually swelling in its course from the mountains, and will sweep to the same oblivion, the shallow sophistry of declaimers, and the wild effusions of anti-republican rage. It is for you to affix the stamp of law to principles developed by argument and supported by reason. An object which promises such diffusive blessings, well deserves your care. It will, amongst many other valuable effects, completely destroy *an influence*, which has already taken root, and having found a congenial fertility of soil, seems

seems to vegetate best in the vicinity of that element on which it was borne to our shores. Remember the instructive moral from the allegory of the fog at the heels of the traveller—at first it was small, low and scarcely discernible, till rising it covered the hills and filled the atmosphere.

This projected plan of the general ticket, will effectually prevent a combination of influential men in a district, and from different parts of the state, to secure the election of a favorite political candidate in a particular district.* This naturally creates fervility and obligation in the member, which lead to consequences present to the mind of every thinking man. Cabal and faction must sink into the dust, under that judicious system, which stretches the sphere of suffrage over an entire state. If it does not destroy them, it will at least controul and paralyze their effects.

From these diversified aspects of the subject, I demand of your understanding, “whether it be not politic and advantageous in South-Carolina to adopt the general ticket.” I have not time to explore it further in detail; to my mind, the position has been satisfactorily maintained. It is well to recollect, that to the re-

* I think I once heard something about treats, barbecues, &c. but perhaps it was a dream!

gulation

gulation proposed, there is no constitutional stumbling-block in the way. You are as free to change the district elections, as you are any other matter of legislative arrangement — There is no more difficulty in the business, than there is in changing a public road, which you do not think proper any longer to use. — By this I mean, that the thing is completely within the regulation of an act of assembly. I look for opposition to it—I expect this to every measure which claims to be republican. But when you see men cling to inveterate abuses, with the same ardor that others advocate the most sacred rights, believe me, there is something grossly defective, something rotten in their system. Keep a steady vigilant eye upon such politicians, and the best refutation you can oppose to their sophisms, will be to bring your plan *to the test of experience*. Let it have a full and fair hearing, and “for trial, put itself upon God and the country.”

With respect to the choice of electors by general ticket, the arguments already urged, apply with great force. A variety of others, peculiarly appropriate to the subject, will be adduced in a separate discussion of this topic. To incorporate them here, I find, will extend my observations to a censurable length.

Fellow-Citizens, I have brought before you grounds which, in my estimation, ought to have

have considerable weight. When I look into the political world, and see a people indifferent to the purity, equality and fairness of the representative system; my reason suggests to me, "that the mind of that country is slain." It is in the United States only with a single exception, that any thing like an experiment has been made to this happy contrivance of government; but even here, it is in many respects imperfect. Its principles are sound and correct, but they require the generous care of a free people to induce them to practice and give scope to such operation.

F A R T. III.

"THIS is the crisis for such regulations, in consequence of an accession by the late census of two members in our representation to congress."

The topic proposed speaks forcibly its own importance, and the proposition it contains appears to exhibit internal and irresistible evidence of its truth.* If the amelioration of

* The argument is founded upon the present apportionment of representation to numbers. Should congress alter this arrangement, we shall be allowed two additional members even at the rate of one for 36,000. Whether the existing plan of one for 33,000 is preserved or not, the principle of the general ticket still holds strongly; because, by adopting a law to this manner of casting, you may provide for the apportionment by congress, should any such be made.

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the representative system were under the guidance of the most cautious and timid policy, and one, in some degree, reluctant to reform, it would naturally embrace this period as imperiously calling for a change, and presenting at the same time, the choicest forms of republican modification. The slow progression of events rarely presents a greater fitness and aptitude for improvement, than the moment in which I write. The embryo of this sacred principle, engendered in the womb of public freedom, has gone its allotted time and is matured for parturition. This delicate and eventful operation is entrusted to the hands of the people; on your care it will depend, whether it shall be brought forth in pangs, its first breath be extinguished, and the delivery prove abortive; or, whether it shall be ushered into being, under the happier auspices of a joyous birth.

The late census of the people of this state has given us two members of congress, in addition to the six elected under the census of 1790; so that, at the next election, we shall be entitled to send eight representatives. It therefore becomes indispensably necessary to new model and revise the law in that respect, in order to make provision for the two newly acquired members. This re-adjustment of the matter must, of necessity, occupy the attention

tion of the legislature at their approaching session, to meet the elections for congress in the year 1802 ; because, being evidently entitled to the accession spoken of, the legislature must immediately determine how, and when, and where they shall be elected. Pursuing, for a moment, the idea of our present district system, the first question which invites enquiry, is, where will you locate the new members ? What new districts will you admeasure and lay out, to meet the occurrence ? Or, will you, in that spirit of compromise, which has already swallowed up some of our best rights, give to particular favored districts the choice of two members, to the exclusion of all the rest ? There is no possible arrangement on this scale, which can be satisfactory to the people generally ; different districts will contend for superior claims ; some will insist on it, on the score of an increased white population ; others, on that of the number of negroes ; various and conflicting demands will be made for the increased representation. It will be a contest of the limbs against the body. The evident absurdity of the present order or rather disorder of things, will apparently afford specious grounds for these pretensions ; but, to me it appears deplorable that the great question of the quantum or measure of representation, should ebb and flow with changeable

ble and precarious events ; that it should be regulated in one district by the increase of the number of negroes, and in another by the augmented population of that particular district ; as if no reference was to be had to the country *as a state* ; as if it were a government by districts ; and as if the accidental and fortuitous advantages, arising from soil and situation, gave an undeniable right to partial, exclusive and pre-eminent privileges. I cannot see any wisdom or justice in the policy which gives to men of a particular territory, because they inhabit that spot, greater and more enlarged political rights than their neighbours, who are members of *the same state*, and equally interested with themselves in all the concerns of state representation. When I am told a district has increased, in the view of congressional representation, I appropriate that increase to the state. Does this give a right to a district to rise in its demands, and say, you must give me two members where I had one before ? The thing is absurd, it is actually throwing the population of the state into separate clans and departments, for the purpose of giving to some an unjust and predominant influence over others ; it is, in fact, to say, that the interest of the whole state shall be made subservient to the interest of some of its constituent parts. If districts were separate and independent

dependent sovereignties, there might be some plausibility in the argument; but as integral parts of a state, the thing is preposterous.— The views already taken of the subject, sufficiently evince this. The federal constitution gives us, as a component part of the confederacy, and as one of the southern states, a representation in the ratio of three fifths for our negroes; it was an advantage gained for the state. But is it at all deducible from this provision, that this weight of representation ought to be apportioned and thrown into *particular* districts? It is a benefit intended for *the state at large*, and consequently ought to be felt throughout. I could enlarge on the subject to the extent of a volume, but I leave it to the reflections of dispassionate men; I disdain to chase the caprices of particular opinions, or to catch the momentary gale of popular prejudice; I speak to the understanding and appeal to the approving judgment of the country; I know that reason and argument only, can open an avenue to the sense and confidence of the people.

This, therefore, is the crisis, in which you may escape from the dilemma, and silence these claims by the adoption of the general ticket. By destroying the present arrangement, and the narrow views which prop up and support it, you remove the cause of jarring and rival interests,

critical season ; every thing is in unison ; the popular spring is now strong and elastic ; delay and indifference will effectually break its force, and debilitate its nerve.

If you seriously and fervently wish to effect a *republican change* you will appreciate the advantages of a period propitious to this end.— This is the prolific seed-time which will swell to exuberant plenty, the future harvest of public good and national prosperity. I expect to hear the usual rant against reformation and improvement—We have heard and seen it bandied about from the dawn of the American revolution, to this day. There are men who consider, even *that*, a diabolical innovation on kingly authority—Others affect to feel the most exquisite sensibility on the subject of political amelioration. Objects loom larger to the eye, from being viewed through a dense and misty medium. Great and attainable good must not be sacrificed to fanciful and idle chimeras ; their affrighted imaginations have already conjured up terrors at a distance, in the spectre of the general ticket, and arrayed it in the robes of jacobinism ! On a nearer approach, *we* find it republican in its aspect, holding up a just equality of rights, and equal congressional representation, and pointing impressively to the strong political necessity of a change. As the great Bacon says, “ It is the reformation

reformation which draweth on the change, and not the desire of change, which pretendeth the reformation." Innovation and reform are indeed spoken of, as if the limit of human wisdom had reached its acmé in its present attainments. I ask, with a celebrated republican, "Is the most sublime and difficult of all arts, the improvement of the social order, to be alone stationary, amid the rapid progress of every other art, liberal and vulgar, to perfection? Where would be the atrocious guilt of a grand experiment, to ascertain the portion of freedom and happiness, that can be created by political institutions." All the improvements of human life are *deviations* from our predecessors, and there must be something more in this dread of innovation, "this horror at remedy," than appears at first view—I see it in strongly marked characters in these words—*the reluctant surrender of power by the few to the many*. That cannot be considered as a visionary project, to which we are conducted by the hand of reason. No, I consider their arguments as having no other clue, and the opposition no other aim, than to preserve, at all events, the present odious system; and, if possible, to augment its pressure. Is the principle advocated true in theory and false in practice? The phrase is more familiar to our ears, than it is admissible to our understanding—

Away

Away with such absurd and vagrant discriminations! This union of truth and falsehood in the same doctrine, applied to the same subject, is impossible. The idea can only have force, when by assumption, practice is improperly applied to a doctrine which it never was intended to include, and associated with a theory, to which it does not belong. Whatever theory pronounces to be true, must be practicable. When, therefore, a proposition be true in theory, it must, if made up of the same ideas and objects, be equally true in practice, where that practice is correspondent to the theory. I do not think it proper in these sort of discussions to resort to metaphysics; but it is sometimes necessary to convince men, that though they imagine themselves entrenched behind maxims, they are in fact, nothing more than fallacious and untenable positions. It requires no very profound research, to detect error of this kind. The truths which regulate our political relations, are few and simple, "and are at no great distance from the surface."

Characters will sometimes arise, who soaring above the level of mankind in the regions of sense and knowledge, refuse (in a government pretending to be free) the participation of equal rights to the people, on the ground of *their want of information. They are too ignorant, say they, to be intrusted with such high powers!*

provers! I look for such observations from men of selfish hearts and muddy understandings; but, that persons of decency and sense should urge them, surprises me; and when I am further told, that men of science and eminent standing state it as *an objection*, I am confounded. Are gentlemen aware that such insinuations strike at the very compact and foundation of society? This is a new mode of measuring out *rights*, by the extent of a man's intellect and capacity. I question very much its operation, even with those who pretend to be "*plus sage que le sages*." I believe, as far as my observation extends, that the people of this state are remarkably well informed on political questions, and I can venture to say, *that their knowledge will enlarge with the increase of their rights*. If they are so miserably ignorant as to be deemed unfit to be trusted with the management of their own concerns, they certainly are under great obligations to their kind rulers for having, now and then, enlightened their benighted minds. How do they manage their state affairs? To me there appears to be a pretty equal division of ability and talents for business, dispersed throughout the country, and carried into the legislature. The same men who struggle for *exclusive privileges*, aspire by correlative pretensions, to a monopoly of all the knowledge of the state.

Those who claim such high intellectual endowments, ought, at least in their politics, to be more moderate ; in their political views, more just ; in their conduct, less disposed to violate and impair the liberties of a free and independent people. To their consideration I refer the topic, and forbear to put forth my strength upon it.

A mind disposed to abandon the illusion of speculation for practical good, will find abundant cause to rejoice in the prospect of our federal arrangements, which are now just breaking on the view. From the wise measures of the present administration, within the short space of a few months, you have already seen an immense reduction of public expenditure to the amount of many thousands, and the ground work laid for infinitely more in the revenue department. You have seen the reduction of useless foreign embassies, and many useful changes of men in office, though extremely moderate in the extent. Instead of *tribute* to the Barbary powers, you have seen a part of our navy actually employed in confining these pirates to their harbours, protecting defenceless citizens from galling captivity, convoying our merchant ships, and giving unrestrained scope to our vigorous and enterprising commerce. This is better than paying millions for tribute to their voracious demands,

mands, and suffering our frigates to rot in the dock-yards. If money must be expended, it is better that it should be done in keeping up a small naval armament *on the defensive*, and some portion of the dollars to go into the pockets of our officers and sailors, than the whole into their infidel coffers.

You have beheld these, and many other valuable reforms resulting from a new administration, recently brought into being, and as yet in its cradle; what may you not expect from its wisdom, when time shall enlarge its growth, ripen its strength, and perfect its manhood? Without the gift of prescience, I see in perspective before me, in its first movements, *the certain reduction of the eight per cent. loan, and the complete abolition of your internal revenue, the stamp law, the excise law, and various others which stand so prominent in the federal calendar of domestic taxation.* Great and beneficial as these will prove, they will be but the fore-runners of a system calculated to carry us back to true constitutional principles, and to cut off those morbid excrescences which had been suffered to grow and fasten upon the government. I look for a regenerated and happy order of things. Does such an administration invite and require your support and co-operation? Is this, or is it not the time to contend for principles? Or are you content

content to be silently carried down the stream again, to that direful state of things from from which we had escaped? Have you not hoarded up your republican energies for the present crisis, or will you blunt the spurs of public spirit and action, by a tame and unavailable procrastination? These are awful questions to a people, and they will be best answered by your conduct in the settlement of the federal representation. It is in truth an era in which the interest of posterity, as well as our own, are deep'y at stake, and depend essentially on the present judicious estimate of our rights. The man who has escaped the horrors of a precipice, or the fury of a tempest, will often look back with fearful solicitude to the dangers of the scene. When you retrace your recent history as a people; when you survey with melancholy emotions the struggles you have endured, and the difficulties you have encountered, to gain *what has of late been achieved*; the mingled inducements of gratitude and patriotism, will preside over its fate and guard its preservation.

Thus, fellow-citizens, have I endeavored hastily to sketch out my proposed investigation of the subject—imperfectly indeed—having little leisure to devote, and less ability to entitle in the cause. I consider these papers as merely a statement of grounds and an exhibition of principles,

principles, furnishing materials as well for reflection, as to kindle in some republican breast, the flame of a resistless eloquence. I profess to be anxious for the event. Animated with a sense of your virtuous exertions, to you, fellow-citizens, I commit the subject; for I know, “that if ye do these things, ye shall live.” I shall indeed rejoice at its adoption; or, if a spirit should arise in Carolina, of sufficient force and power not only to strangle, but afterwards to trample on the desires and claims of the people—in musing over the misfortunes of my country, I shall feel no regret in having given these sentiments to the world.

C R I T O.

